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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A scanning optical apparatus includes a light source, a deflecting element for deflecting a beam of light emitted from the light source, an optical device 5 for causing the beam of light emitted from the light source to be imaged into a linear shape long in the main scanning direction on the deflecting surface of the deflecting element. The optical device is comprised of a first optical element and a second optical element, and a third optical element for causing the beam of light deflected by the deflecting element to be imaged into a spot-like shape on a surface to be scanned. The third optical element includes a single lens, the opposite lens surfaces of 15 which both include a toric surface of an aspherical surface shape in the main scanning plane, the curvatures of the opposite lens surfaces in the sub scanning plane being continuously varied from the on-axis toward the off-axis in the effective portion of 20 the lens.